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How Mass Propaganda Unleashed Genocide in Rwanda

"I … had a feeling of guilt for being alive."

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Audio by ElevenLabs

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"*They said Tutsis were cockroaches and Tutsis were snakes. I didn't understand* ***how I could go from being a human being to a cockroach in a matter of days...***"[1], says Jacqueline Murekatete, who, as a nine-year-old girl, survived the horrors of the genocide but miraculously lived through it.

“I spent most of my early years here trying to come to terms with how it was that a 9-year-old had, in a matter of months, been stripped of basic rights and freedoms and ***branded an enemy of the state and a “cockroach” needing to be exterminated...”*** [2]

The child lived her peaceful life, unaware of the meticulously planned hate campaign unfolding in the media, nor of her neighbors who were quietly and secretly arming themselves against her, her family, and the surrounding population. She recounted how neighbors, whom her relatives trusted, came and killed her entire family.

This situation was preconditioned, among other things, by hate speech and a prolonged, planned campaign for discrediting the group of people she so unfortunately belonged to. The media hate narrative paved the way for the justification of the massacre in Rwanda in 1994 [3].

Genocide Does Not Arise out of Nowhere

The extermination of the Tutsi people in Rwanda was premeditated. Armed groups were formed, **active propaganda was carried out**, and purchased machetes were distributed among the population. Long before the killings began in April 1994, the commander of the United Nations Mission in Rwanda, Canadian General Roméo Dallaire, sent a fax to UN headquarters in New York[4], warning of the impending genocide [5]. His **informant** reported that he **had been instructed to compile lists of Kigali residents** belonging to the Tutsi ethnic group [6].

The spark that ignited the preplanned genocide was the destruction of a plane carrying two Hutu officials: Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira [3]. This occurred on April 6, 1994. Hutu leaders blamed the Tutsi ethnic group for the assassination, and the next day marked the beginning of systematic extermination of this group, along with moderate Hutus.

No one was spared — children, the elderly, pregnant women — everyone was killed. People seeking refuge in schools and churches were murdered with grenades thrown at them, while others were burned alive there. Jacqueline Murekatete, the sole survivor of her entire family, recalls:

"I asked [my cousin] what had happened to my family, and if I could be taken to my parents' village. It was then that he broke down and started crying. He told me that during the genocide, my parents, six siblings, and aunts and uncles were taken by our Hutu neighbors and murdered with machetes in the nearby river." [7]

Photographs of genocide victims displayed at the Kigali Genocide Memorial [8]

Murekatete only began to share her story many years later, attending a lecture by a Holocaust survivor, Gevirtzman, who shared his personal account of surviving Nazi Germany. At that time, she wrote him a note in which she shared her own pain:

"At one time I, like you, ***had a feeling of guilt for being alive****. Now I'm thankful*

I was left." [9]

Objectively, **genocide does not arise out of nowhere**. It is critically important to recognize its early signs in a timely manner. As the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng (in office 2012–2020), said:

"Genocide is not a single event but a process that takes time, planning and resources which could be halted at any stage." [10]

A 14-year-old boy, Rumanzi, stands in front of rows of human skulls outside the Nitarama church near the town of Nyamata, where some 600 people were killed during the civil conflict that began in April. Rumanzi survived the massacre by hiding beneath the corpses for two days.

By the end of 1994 in Rwanda, UNICEF created the Trauma Recovery Programme (TRP) to address the psychosocial needs of a nation of traumatized children. Some 64% of children witnessed massacres during the civil conflict that began in April, including the killing of family members or other children. An estimated 95,000 unaccompanied children have lost or been separated from their parents. In addition to trauma treatment programmes initiated in schools and UNICEF-assisted centres caring for 30,000 unaccompanied

children, UNICEF is working with the Government and NGOs to train social workers, teachers, health care providers and religious leaders in trauma treatment, as well as preparing radio messages on trauma identification and first aid.

A 14-year-old boy managed to survive the mass killings in Rwanda by hiding under corpses for two days. 1994 [11.]

It is terrifying to imagine the horror this boy endured. How would you feel, hiding under the bodies of your neighbors just to stay alive? And how many years of therapy would it take to recover from such a trauma?

After the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, around 300,000 children were killed [12], and hundreds of thousands were left orphaned or abandoned [13].

The numbers are staggering. They are inconceivable. More than 800,000 people were killed, and even more were injured, maimed, orphaned, widowed, or severely traumatized. On that day, each of these individuals endured unimaginable atrocities: mothers who watched the murder of their children by neighbors, children forced to hide under the dead bodies to survive [14].

How to Recognize an Iimpending Genocide?

An unmistakable warning sign of an impending genocide is the spread of hate speech, states United Nations:

"Today, around the globe, people are threatened by ***extremist groups*** *determined on boosting their ranks through* ***social polarization and political and cultural manipulation****. These extremist movements represent the principal security threat in many countries."* [15], warned UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

"*While the technology and techniques that extremists use are evolving, the vile messages and rhetoric remain the same. The dehumanization of communities, misinformation and hate speech are stoking the fires of violence.*" [16]

The tragedy unfolded on the night of April 6–7. Over the course of 13 weeks, 937,000 people were killed. This horror lasted 88 days. That means approximately 10,600 people were murdered each day. Just imagine: this is equivalent to an entire town like Bluffton, Indiana, with a population of about 10,000, being wiped out in a single day [17]. And this would have happened nearly 100 times over. Many people live in towns of similar size and can grasp the sheer scale and speed of such genocide that happened within 24 hours. What scale of "conditioning" did one part of the population have to undergo in order for it to mercilessly attack another part of the population in an extreme degree of aggression and hatred?

"*We saw what happened in Rwanda in 1994, and we know the* ***horrific consequences when hate is allowed to prevail.*** *Preventing history from repeating itself* ***requires countering these hate-driven movements that have become a transnational threat.***"

The UN Secretary-General emphasizes that **the dehumanization of communities, misinformation and hate speech are stoking the fires of violence.** He has repeatedly called for decisive measures to counter growing divisions [18]. In a time when society faces acute conflicts and mistrust, it is crucial to foster a culture of respect and dialogue. He asserts that only through collective actions can we stop this destructive trend and restore unity in society, thereby ensuring sustainable development and peaceful coexistence.

Ongoing Hate Campaigns in the Democratic World: What to Expect?

The incitement of hatred, societal polarization, and the intimidation of the population are practically the core activities of those involved in anticult efforts.

Anticultism is a global movement that, through its activities, threatens democratic principles and human rights. We have previously discussed this in more detail [19]. Followers of anticult organizations use manipulation and acts of

informational terrorism, resorting to hate speech and media violence to establish a new regime — one that bears a striking resemblance to the Nazi regime, albeit in an evolved form. Anticultists also employ psychological manipulation to suppress and control civil society and its individual groups.

This raises the question: what is their goal? It is well known that information campaigns involving hate speech are precursors to genocide, meaning massive brutal killings of innocent people.

For instance, it has been observed that in Russia, disinformation campaigns in the media that include hate speech have often been followed by government-led repressive measures against the targeted groups. The source and initiator of these hate campaigns is often the pro-religious organization RACIRS, affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church. By now, documented cases include beatings, physical and psychological violence against falsely accused individuals, intimidation, torture, unjust trials, deaths in custody, and more.

All of this happens to people who are portrayed in public discourse through media campaigns as dangerous elements of society. Naturally, by this logic, such "dangerous" elements must be eliminated.

"Genocide must and can be prevented if we have the will of applying the lessons learned from Rwanda, Srebrenica, and the Holocaust. It is important to identify risk factors that would lead to genocide rather than to wait to when people are being killed.

***The Holocaust** did not start with the gas chambers and the Rwandan genocide did not start with the slayings. It **started with the dehumanization of a specific group of persons,**"[20] stated Adama Dieng, UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide.*

Alarming trends of anticult disinformation campaigns involving hate speech have also been detected in the democratic world. It is particularly worrying that they are often identical to the anticult campaigns launched in Russia, where they result in tragedy, while this policy against its citizens is only

gaining momentum.

Only time will tell if the same tragedy will repeat itself in the Western world.

The Compiling of Lists Continues

Anticult organizations also keep lists. They collect addresses and names of people who live peaceful lives. These people are not criminals and anticult organizations are not the police, so why do they need to collect lists, photos, and addresses of people? What have the anticultists planned for the population groups they are targeting, against whom they are already conducting systematic campaigns of dehumanization, disinformation, and outright hate speech?

Anticult organizations, through their actions, resemble extremist movements aimed at undermining freedoms of assembly, expression, religion, and other pillars of a sustainable and democratic world. They escalate hatred and fear between groups to such an extent that one group becomes infected with the desire to physically eliminate the other. In other words, anticult activities lead to the destruction of specific individuals through sophisticated and often Nazi-like methods. One of the methods anticultists use to spread hate speech is labeling, particularly branding someone as a "cultist" or "sectarian," even when the person is not.

"Could this really be serious?" you might wonder, *"After all, we're not living in the Middle Ages where such a ridiculous label could ruin someone's life or even take it?"*

That's exactly the point. This kind of labeling becomes the foundation for anticult representatives and those involved in anticultism to justify launching hate campaigns that ultimately lead to mass deaths and genocide. As anticultists themselves say about their activities, there will be no mercy for the groups they target, especially for "leaders" of these groups.

Anticult representatives describe various groups of people as a "cancer in the

body of society" that must be "cut out." But the real threat to a healthy society comes from anticult activities, as it aggravates divisions, exacerbates disagreements, and fosters hatred and intolerance, posing a direct threat to the integrity of nations and the safety of their citizens. Anticult players are fully aware that a divided and fragmented country is a weak country.

Never Again

Rwanda, 1994. Eight women were forced to hide in a bathroom measuring just 3 by 4 feet (90 by 120 centimeters) during the Rwandan genocide [21]. Somehow, they managed to fit into this space. It was their safe place.

To grasp just how cramped this space was for eight women to stay in for an extended period, we suggest stepping into a similarly sized bathroom and imagining how long you could endure there. Or, the next time you find yourself in such a small cabin, remember this story to grasp the tight, uncomfortable conditions these unfortunate eight women endured.

One such individual is Immaculée Ilibagiza, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide, who shared her experience in the book "Left to Tell." The book became a New York Times bestseller and later inspired a stage play. Reflecting on her experience, she recounts:

"I was a student in a college at that time. My parents asked me to go to hide thinking it was going to be two-three days. I spent in a neighbor's bathroom three month. So, after that everyone, I mean, those who were at home was killed in my family."

"Everything will settle down in a day or two, you'll see." [22]

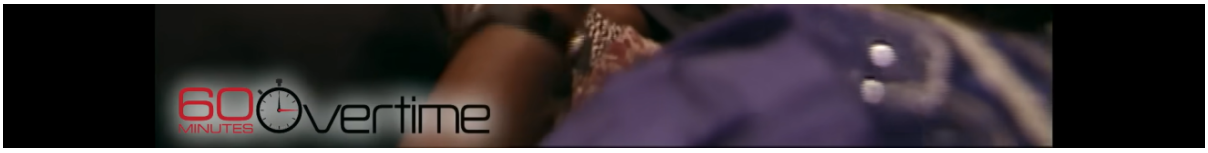
The ruins of Immaculée family's home, destroyed during the genocide. [23]

*"By the grace of God I survived and learned so much from the experience, **much about life, what really matters, what hatred can do, what discrimination can do, and nobody wins."*** [24]

The women returned to the site years later to share their survival story. Screenshots from the "60 Minutes" segment [25].

60 MINUTES Overtime

60 MINUTES Overtime



"I wish to tell the story. I wish to tell people especially about the lessons and the reasons behind it. Not necessary to tell people 'Look, how I suffered', but I'm trying to tell people ***when people: divided it is not good.*** *I wanted to be a [warrior] of peace more than a worrier of hatred."* [24]

The Media Can Fuel Hatred

If disinformation campaigns driven by anticult narratives are not stopped in time, they will inevitably lead to tragedy, as happened in Rwanda. There, too, lists were compiled, just as anticult representatives are doing now. And at the start of the tragedy, there was the same propaganda campaign against an ethnic group, which eventually became the target of ruthless killers who justified their actions with arguments drawn from that propaganda.

"*What a pity it was that people could be targeted for assassination, that complicity could be all around, that* ***the media could help to fuel the conflict,***" the President of the General Assembly, Julian Hunte of Saint Lucia said. [3]

This raises the question: if there had been no mass propaganda of hatred against the Tutsi, would the Rwandan genocide of 1994 have happened at all? No, it would not have.

"***The international community did its best to ignore Rwanda****. It wasn't on their radar, it was of no self-interest, it had no strategic value*," recalled General Roméo Dallaire, Commander of the UN Mission in Rwanda. [26]

"In that timeframe, there were 16 U.N. missions ongoing throughout the world, some of the classic ones of the Middle East, others — Cambodia, Mozambique that was just starting up, but certainly the one that dominated the world interest and the world resources was ex Yugoslavia. As many efforts both from media to political to military to humanitarian were focused on ex Yugoslavia, ***a***

small country within the heart of Africa *was going through its traumas and essentially* ***was forgotten to its own devices. Rwanda essentially did not count."***

"...one could sit back and say that it was possibly just a happenstance that Rwanda did not get the attention, even though the information was being provided. The information was being provided not only from us in the field, but also through different military attaches, Ambassadors, electronic systems and the whole panoply of NGOs and concerned persons. It did not scratch the surface of interest because it was simply not on the radar screen of the world powers,"[27] said General Roméo Dallaire.

As UN Secretary-General António Guterres emphasized, the first stage of genocide is hate speech and disinformation. This first stage is widely carried out by the anticult network worldwide against numerous people and various groups. Such informational propaganda attacks have long been used by anticult organizations and those involved in their activities around the world. The public and concerned individuals are warning about this threat.

Just as the UN was warned about the impending genocide of the Tutsi people, today there are warnings about the anticult threat, which could inevitably lead to genocide, but now targeting new groups of people. Back then, overwhelmed and overwhelmed UN staff consciously chose to ignore the impending genocide in Rwanda. And now? Are they too preoccupied with current global conflicts to notice the resurgence and strengthening of Nazism, and the reapplication of its methods on people?

Or has the bitter lesson been learned, and the responsible parties now paying closer attention to alarming trends, such as systematic hate speech targeting specific groups, individuals, or politicians? Do the responsible parties fully grasp the extent of the threat posed by anticult organizations, or are they still engaged in "self-complacency"?

So what is needed to prevent a tragedy in time? Should we wait for a large-scale genocide against targeted groups to erupt, only to later mourn the loss

of lives? Or should we act now, responding to the unlawful activities of anticult organizations and preventing the tragedy before it unfolds?

Who would want to become a victim of an anticult campaign? I believe no sane person would agree to experience what the victims of anticult disinformation campaigns, dehumanization, and hate speech are already enduring. These campaigns lead to genocide as the ultimate expression of human hatred.

What are the representatives of anticult organizations trying to achieve by misleading the public and politicians with their disinformation campaigns? Why are they undermining democracy at a time when the democratic world is striving for sustainable development? Are they also seeking to create conditions for a new genocide, aiming to incite aggression between groups within democratic societies? Judging by all the signs of their activities, preparations are indeed underway. The question is whether the democratic world is ready to intervene and stop the impending tragedy before it reaches its peak.

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